Sheridan

David Lipman, telephone interview Feb. 18, 1988
Denver

has much info on Lipman family & Jewish community.
His grandfather, Joseph, came to Sheridan in 1905/1906 & went to work for Ben Gross & Co. The Company purchased hides & metals (junk).

Gave possible leads
~~Mish Mish~~
Mishkin & family of Kemmerer
Nathan Hill, of Greyhall – worked for Pepper Metal & Tank (3)
Mrs. Bert Gross in Sheridan
Yetta Niss, of Billings
Dr. Seymour ~~Sigmund~~ Thiderman of Sheridan, came in 50's.

Mrs. Bert Gross
141 W. Heald
Sheridan, WY
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Lipman, David
2151 South Acoma
Denver, Colorado

March 26, 1984

His grandfather, Joseph Lipman, was a soldier during Russo-Japanese War. After the war, he came to the US. He went to Detroit to live with brothers. He later, for unknown reasons, went to Wyoming, possibly because he saw life in Detroit much like ghettos of New York. Or possibly he went west as far as he could until he ran out of money. Bert Gross told the following story. About 1907, Joseph came to Sheridan. He couldn't speak any English. "Louie," a Pakistani who had a push cart, recognized Joe's accent & called upon Ben Gross. Ben gave Joe a job of picking up scrap metal.

Joe's daughter, Leia, left Gillette in 1975. Died in Tacoma, WA in 1982.

Ben & Bert Gross were "Iron Mongers." Bert married Eva Tillman, widow of a mayor. Business name was B. Gross & Company. Bert sent David's father to University of Wyoming for 1.5 semesters, until depression hit, ~~he~~ in Fall 1933. His father worked for Bert Gross & bought company in 1967. He sold to Carl Weissman & Son of Great Falls, MT in 1973. He died of cancer in May 1973.

Lipman, David
2151 South Scott
Sheridan, WY

March 26, 1958
Page 2

His (David's) mother was Dora Nissenkorn. Her parents were Joseph & Rachel. The family emigrated in 1919. Later take name of Nuss. They farmed in Iowa & had a deli in Wisconsin.
Relatives: Carl in California; Morris in Billings; Yetta Lettak (sister) with Jake & Frieda in Billings.
Dora was coaxed into coming west to Montana by Morris, who in turn, with the aid of Joseph & his wife, did some maneuvering & matchmaking to get Dora & David's father together.

David described Sheridan as a tolerant place for Jews to live.

Dora used to work in Macy's in 1938 & 1939 in the bargain basement store. She lied about her name, going by Anne Nuss, in order to get the job.

Joe was 6 feet tall, wiry but strong, even in old age.

Lipman, David
2151 South Leoma
Denver, Co.

March 26, 1988
Page 3
Lipman's in Gillette started by Joe.
During 1960s, Lipman's Store in Gillette was the largest Levi Store in Wyoming. He recalls WRO in Cheyenne calling for ~~Levis~~ Levi's for Frontier Days. Store served people in Northeast Wyoming, Southern Montana, & Eastern South Dakota.

By time his father bought B. Gross & Co., it had a second office in Gillette. Employees were Mike & John Zamada, ~~He~~ Lloyd Long, & Albert Brunner, in Powell, an associate working in Big Horn Basin Pipe & Supply. There was a man who operated Gillette office but don't know his name. None were Jews. His father worked an arrangement with Weissman & Sons to transport metal to Pueblo's Colorado Fuel & Iron. Hides were sent to Tanneries in Denver & elsewhere. Starting at age 14, David worked for company ~~after school~~ after school; Saturdays & summers.

Joe later went into the clothing business in Sheridan, after years with B. Gross & Co. He later branched out to Gillette & closed Sheridan store. In Sheridan

Lipman, David
2151 South Acoma
Denver, Co.

March 26, 1985
Page #4

Joe found tough competition with Fryberger & Gore, with whom he was friends. "A working man's agreement" was made whereby Joe would go to Gillette & the others would remain in Sheridan.

On Jewish identity

Family went to Billings for High Holidays & sometimes Passover. Usually went to Gillette for seder. Lipmans paid dues to synagogue in Billings. He & sister Jeanne got out of school to go to Billings for Yom Kippur. When he went to University of Wyoming in late 1960s, he found Cheyenne rabbi to be too orthodox & strict.

Billings congregation was conservative but not rigid. Rabbi Horowitz was supportive of all facets. David studied under him. He lived with his aunt for one summer, during weekends, for 4 months. The situation ended because of a recession. There was no money to continue to take weekly buses to Billings. Also situation with Yetta was not the best.

Lipman, David
2151 South Acoma
Denver, CO

March 26, 1988
Page 5

Other Jewish families: Sam Katz during 30's + 40's.

Observation: On Jews who grow up in Wyoming, we are more like Israelis than Jews in the US. Its the atmosphere + pioneer spirit. Jewish people here are unique. It is difficult to maintain religion + be kosher. Learn religion on your own.

Wife not Jewish